


A Framework for Assessing Federal Agencies' Acquisition Functions



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Overview

- Why?
- What?
- How?

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Why We Developed the Framework

- Over **\$300 billion annually** is awarded by the federal government via contracts.
- Acquiring these goods and services in an efficient and accountable manner is therefore **essential**.
- Systemic weaknesses - which often manifest themselves in problems on individual procurement actions - continue to be identified.
- Need for high-level assessment of agencies' acquisition function.




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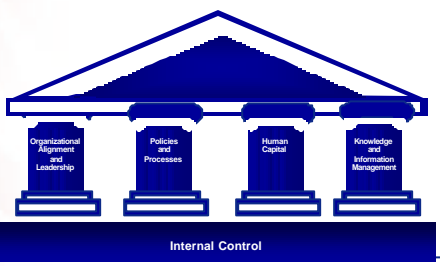
What is the Acquisition Framework?

The Framework Is :	The Framework Is Not :
<ul style="list-style-type: none">General guidance to<ul style="list-style-type: none">Evaluate an agency's acquisition functionIdentify areas for improvementAn integration of existing guidance and standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A tool to<ul style="list-style-type: none">Evaluate specific acquisition actions, contracts, or complianceConduct detailed assessmentsA substitute for existing standards

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What is the Acquisition Framework?




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Organizational Alignment and Leadership

- Effective organizational alignment enables a coordinated and strategically oriented approach to acquisition activities.
- Executive leadership:
 - determines the relationship between the various functional departments,
 - is key to strengthening the interaction between the agency's executive management and employees, and
 - sets the direction, culture, and perception of the agency.


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Policies and Processes

- Implementing strategic decisions to achieve desired agency-wide outcomes and behaviors requires clear and transparent policies and processes that are implemented consistently.
- Effective policies and processes govern the planning, award, administration, and oversight of acquisition efforts, with a focus on:
 - ✦ attention to internal and external relationships, and
 - ✦ assuring that agency dollars achieve intended results.


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Human Capital

- The value of an organization and its ability to satisfy customers depends on its most valuable asset—its people.
- Successfully acquiring goods and services and executing and monitoring contracts to help the agency meet its missions requires valuing and investing in the acquisition workforce.
- Agencies must think strategically about recruiting, developing and retaining talent within the acquisition workforce.


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Knowledge and Information Management






- Effective knowledge and information management provides credible, reliable, and timely data to make strategic acquisition decisions.
- All stakeholders in the acquisition process--from program managers to the finance department-- need meaningful data to perform their respective roles and responsibilities.

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Using the Framework

Element

-  **CORNERSTONES:** Key to effective stewardship.
-  **Critical success factors:** Key to achieving program and mission results.
-  Key questions
-  Look fors
-  Cautions

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Our Methodology



Synthesis of the experience, knowledge, and expertise:

- within GAO,
- federal and state agencies,
- the private sector, and
- academia

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Look for the Acquisition Framework by visiting our website:

www.gao.gov



We welcome any feedback you might have to enhance the usefulness of this framework. Please send us your comments by e-mailing frameworkcomments@gao.gov.

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